

## *Standards Impact on Integrated Learning*

While standards alone will not renew education, there will be no renewal or any other sustained change without them. Standards set the direction, determine the level of expectation, and create the conditions for focusing resources - time, dollars, and professional expertise and energy. Standards provide the mark for measuring achievement and the benchmark for how well we are doing.

We have learned from years of serious and valiant, but often futile, attempts to integrate learning experiences on the basis of content alone. It simply cannot be done, let alone done well. With standards defining what students are to know, what they are expected to be able to do, and what personal behaviors they are to exhibit, there is hope that the various sources of content, the professional, yet idiosyncratic, instructional practices of teachers, and the varying application of teaching resources can result in a common ground of what it means to have learned.

Most of all, standards are visionary statements. They describe what the learner is to be like and to be able to do. Standards embrace the essence of what an education is supposed to be like in personal, student terms. After all, the renewal of education that we all seek is not really about schooling. It is about learning. But, schooling must embrace a variety of processes, programs, and practices designed and/or selected to help students LEARN. Without standards, most any practice, as long as it is considered "professional, promising, or best," will do. However, standards require the designing and/or selecting of programs, processes, and practices to meet the learner's need.

Finally, standards offer hope for the future. Standards keep us focused on the target. Standards encourage flexibility in approach. Standards ensure that the enduring qualities we want for our students do not get lost in the rhetoric of politics or the argument of reform. Standards write new ideas, new ideologies, and new ways of thinking.

All subjects or disciplines of schooling must focus on standards. Subjects or disciplines should address standards outside their respective domains. Any discipline or subject area that addresses multiple standards in multiple areas should be encouraged.

Where do the Visual and Performing Arts fit into reform? Check the standards. The Visual and Performing Arts address areas across science, math, social studies, and literature. The arts are about beliefs, values, and cultures, and they bring authenticity to the teaching-learning process.

The Visual and Performing Arts Frameworks includes both standards and recommended instructional content. Both are essential. Visual and Performing Arts lead the way and set the pace for change and renewal. Visual and Performing Arts are vital to standards-based change in our schools and are essential for anyone regarded as an "educated" person.

*Doug Christensen, Commissioner of Education*

## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

### ***How can Frameworks lead to integrated learning?***

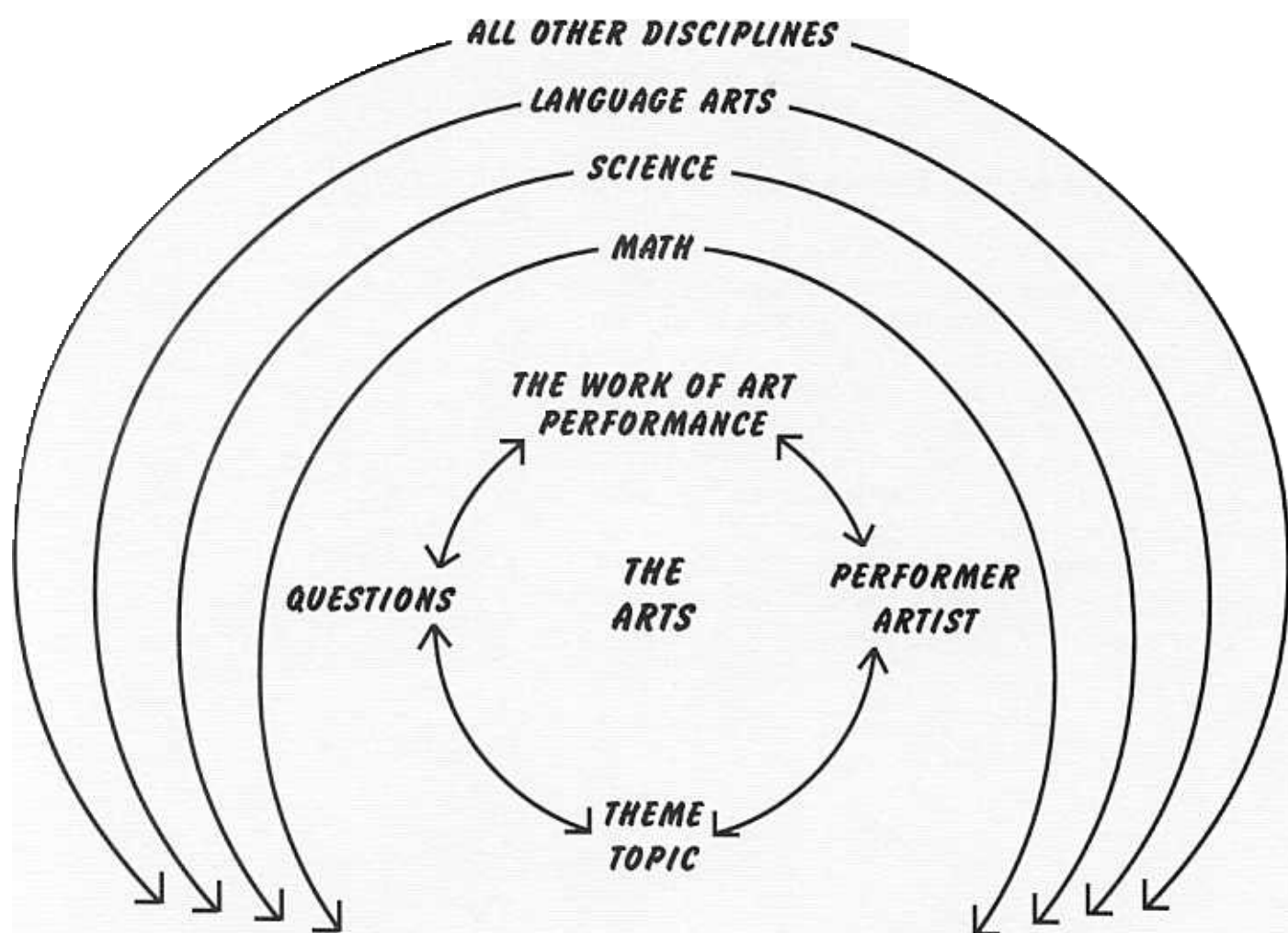
Whether building lessons, units, courses, or complete K-12 curriculum designs, there are multiple models for attaining those ends. This model asks curriculum designers to look at the whole picture when creating interdisciplinary units.

The following illustration puts the arts in the center of curriculum decisions (pp. 11-13). Note in the illustration that the “Arts” are cradled in the lap of “Standards.” The standards are then achieved by selecting content through performance objectives/questions, assessments, and activities. All areas of study, such as the arts, math, science, language arts, etc., point back to the standards as the “focus for learning.”

This holistic model asks educators to consider all of the facets of curriculum design. These decisions do not have to be linear or sequential, but should always be made in relationship to focusing on a standard.

The steps are outlined below. Keep in mind that the order in which they are presented is only a suggestion to help you get started.

1. Select an appropriate standard (or standards) that focuses on “What students should know and be able to do.”
2. Select art works/performances, artists, themes, and/or questions that would support your standards and unit plan. (Refer to pp. 11-13 in the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document.)
3. Write a rationale explaining why this unit is important to teach and for students to know and be able to do.
4. Select the best performance objectives and questions to meet the standards from the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document.
5. Select activities that support the desired learning from the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document and create others on your own. Be sure to put them in a context that your students will enjoy working with.
6. Select one or more disciplines to collaborate with in order to extend this unit into other parts of your school. What could the history teacher or the language arts, math, or science teachers do to support the selected standard or standards?
7. Put your plan together in a vignette that would best describe your unit plan to another.



# **STANDARDS**

**PERFORMANCE  
OBJECTIVES/QUESTIONS**

**ASSESSMENTS**

**ACTIVITIES**

***Building Interdisciplinary Study with a Focus on Standards***

## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

### ***How have school teams created integrated learning?***

The following interdisciplinary plans illustrate how two Nebraska schools - one rural and one urban - approached a similar theme. Broken Bow's theme is based on quilting; Omaha's theme highlights the rural roots of our state. These examples were created during Nebraska's 1996 K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks Summer Symposium. They are included just as they were written during one very intense day of brainstorming and writing. The school teams will refine and rework their plans as the school year progresses.

***Vignette: Broken Bow Public Schools team investigates Quilters...***

Broken Bow Schools has laid the groundwork for a unit which takes place throughout the year focusing on the standard "Students recognize and value the connections between the arts and their own lives and environments." The heart of the unit lies in the production and presentation of the play *Quilters* which deals with the relationships of women, their story telling, and the creation of quilt squares to represent their life events. Activities will take place in grades K-12, will tie to themes and events presented in the play, and incorporate as many areas of the curriculum as possible.

Activities for the visual arts may include, but are not limited to: a study in color theory, students creating their own quilt squares, a study of the Western movement, a study of pioneer photography, using community people as resources for quilting and weaving, resourcing the Custer County Historical Society, wall hangings, creation of a mural for the elementary school by the high school art club, and a study of the quilt painting "Tar Beach."

Activities for the theatre may include, but are not limited to: performance of *Quilters*, role-playing, a study of *Our Town*, *O Pioneers*, *The Quilt Story*, *Grandma's Quilt* and *The Josephina Story Quilt*, relating life events in literature, a study of R.P. Smith's cowboy poetry, poetry written on life experiences and set to music.

Activities for music may include, but are not limited to: a study of Early American Band songs; a quartet performance; a study of Native American music; a fall concert to kick off the theme for the year; songs related to life events with inclusion of the freshman compositions "Meet the Sandhillers"; an Early American music concert; a sixth grade opera focusing on life events; Ivan Neth (saw musician); composing songs on Nebraska, or group life events; a study of composers' life experiences; Otto Rosenfield (storyteller with music); community members to participate in Music in Our Schools Month; a study of songs from *Quilters*; writing poetry and setting it to music.

Activities for dance may include, but are not limited to: a study and creation of a period dance; square dancing, country line dancing, a video of Native American dance, interpretation of dance scenes in *Rodeo*, a study of *Western Women* (Part I - "Pioneer Women"), Gary Schaaf as resource for possible workshops, elementary creating a dance to song from *Quilters*.

Rationale: There is a need to convey to our K-12 students the significance of the arts as reflections of lives - daily and life milestones - through interdisciplinary approach. The musical *Quilters* serves as the inspiration for a year long emphasis on the theme "Quilt of Life" which in turn will give our students opportunity to create and/or respond to dance, theatre, music and visual arts.

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## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

### ***Vignette: Omaha Public Schools team investigates rural roots...***

1. **Select an appropriate standard (or standards) that focuses on “What students should know and be able to do.”**

Students recognize the connection between the arts and their own lives and environments.

2. **Select art works/performances, artists, themes, and/or questions that would support your standards and unit plan. (Refer to pp. 11-13 in the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document.)**

#### **Theatre/Performance**

*State Fair*  
*Oklahoma*  
Nebraska Theatre Caravan  
Story Teller: Nancy Duncan  
Story Teller: Mary Heise  
KIOS “Rabbit Tales”

#### **Dance**

Square Dancing  
Line Dancing  
Virginia Reel  
*Rodeo*

#### **Authors**

Marie Sandoz  
Laura Ingalls Wilder  
Willa Cather  
Roger Welsch

#### **Visual Arts**

Grant Wood  
Andrew Wyeth  
James Wyeth  
Thomas Hart Benton  
Omaha Quilters' Guild  
Nebraska Arts Council Artists in Residence  
*American Fold Painters of the Centuries*  
by Paul Siefert and Edward Hicks

#### **Music**

Folk Songs  
Country Western  
Cowboy Songs  
Aaron Copeland's *Hoedown*  
Student Made Musical Instruments  
Phyllis Dunne: *Making Music Come Alive*

#### **Literature/Language Arts**

*Dear Rebecca, Winter is Here*  
*Sara, Plain and Tall*  
Cowboy Poetry  
*The Legend of Pecos Bill*

#### **Science/Math**

Agriculture  
Animal Husbandry  
Genetics  
Conservation/Stewardship  
Economics  
Education Department of the Beef Council  
Nebraska Pork Producers Association  
Nebraska Soybean Board  
Gifford Farm, Randy Gleason  
Douglas County Extension Office  
Ken Wordeman, Nebraska Corn Board

## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

3. **Write a rationale explaining why this unit is important to teach and for students to know and be able to do.**

It is important for students to recognize the connection between the arts and their own lives and environments to enhance and enrich their understanding of the historical, cultural and economic impact of their rural roots. "City Kids, Rural Roots" is an enrichment unit for students in grades 3 through 6.

4. **Select the best performance objectives and questions to meet the standards from the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document.**

### Performance Objectives

Dance: Demonstrate dance fundamentals related to them.

Perform a dance from another time period.  
*Technical Approach to Perceiving*  
*Cultural/Historical Approach to Perceiving*

Music: Explain the feeling caused by a piece of music recently hear or performed.

Interpret a piece of music through narration or illustration.  
*Aesthetic Approach to Evaluating*  
*Creative Approach to Interpreting*

Visual Arts: Explore a variety of techniques and media.

Interpret visual images in their cultural/historical contexts.  
*Technical Approach to Perceiving*  
*Cultural/Historical Approach to Interpreting*

Theatre: Identify how their criteria for evaluating a theatrical experience are drawn form other kinds of experiences in their lives; e.g. television, sports.

Identify and trace universal themes in plays across different cultures and times.  
*Critical Approach to Connecting*  
*Cultural/Historical Approach to Connecting*

5. **Select activities that support the desired learning from the K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks document and create others on your own. Be sure to put them in a context that your students will enjoy working with.**

- A. View one of several famous paintings of a farm scene, i.e., "The Hailstorm" by Thomas Hart Benton. Discussion should include questions such as, what do you like about this painting, has the student ever seen a farm landscape compare and contrast the elements of the painting. After discussion, students will recreate the scene as depicted in the painting in a freeze form and in a moving interpretation of events preceding and/or following the moment in time. Students will research the cultural/historical time period of the painting and choose appropriate music to accompany their tableaux.

## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

- B. After viewing several aerial photographs of existing farmscapes, students will create similar pattern prints using a variety of media to depict the diverse plowing/planting patterns (at this time you could mention stewardship of the land), such as, stamps could be blocks wrapped with string and dipped in paints to be pressed in a variety of directions.
  - C. The theme of patterns could be extended to the study of the folk tradition of quilting. Literature connections could be made, such as, The Keeping Quilt, Nebraska A-Z, or Grandmother's Quilt. Quilt patterns could be explored and designed using the computer program Tesselmania. Students could learn the folk song, "Seeing Nellie Home" (The Quilting Party). Folk dancers could be invited to demonstrate and teach dance patterns through folk dance. Square Dancing to contemporary line dancing. Homemade instruments could be made by the students to accompany the music, such as, cigar box guitars, upright bass from a tub and broom handle and washboards.
  - D. Culminating Activity: The After Quilting Social Quilting Bee tradition would be traced back to the early pioneer days to discover that after the sewing was finished the men would join the women for a social time. Students could decorate a shoe box to serve as a container for an old-fashioned box lunch. Dances could be demonstrated and taught to others. Instruments played. Aerial prints and quilting projects displayed.
6. **Select one or more disciplines to collaborate with in order to extend this unit into other parts of your school. What could the History teacher do to support the selected standard or standards...or the language arts, math, science or...**

### **Specialists:**

Music teacher  
Art teacher  
Information Manager

### **Community Resources:**

Education Department of the Beef Council  
Nebraska Pork Producers Association, Inc.  
Nebraska Soybean Board, Educational Soybean Kit  
Gifford Farm, Educational Theme Tours  
Auctioneer  
Ag Based Programs, 4-H, Douglas County Extension  
Nebraska Corn Board  
Retired Teacher's Association-the one room school house and life on the farm  
Square Dancers  
Omaha Quilters Guild Education Outreach Liason.



## EXPLORING INTEGRATED LEARNING

### **7. Put your plan together in a vignette that would best describe your unit plan to another.**

"City Kids, Rural Roots" is an interdisciplinary unit designed for students to gain an understanding and appreciation of the rural heritage of Nebraskans. Through a variety of activities students will come to recognize the art and music which reflects the feeling and mood of rural Nebraska as well as have an opportunity to learn and practice the traditional folk dances. To gain a better understanding of how visual arts is infused in the lives of the agricultural community a variety of media will be studied including the folk tradition of quilting and the more contemporary practice of landscape art. Students will study historical pieces such as Thomas Hart Benton's "The Hailstorm," employing discussion and role-playing while comparing the subject matter and artist's perspectives with their own life experiences. A variety of literary works will be incorporated to serve both as an enhancement and point of historical and cultural references for the unit. Students will engage in a broad spectrum of science and math curriculum related experiences to gain a better understanding of the environmental concerns of agriculturalists through a study of the stewardship programs and conservation methods used by farmers today.

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